

REMARKS

Claims 1-11, 14 and 15, as amended, remain herein. Claims 12 and 13 were previously canceled.

Applicants appreciate the telephone interview conducted by Examiner Neckel on August 16, 2006. During that interview, Applicants discussed the Section 112, paragraph 2, rejection stated in the Office Action mailed May 17, 2006. While the Office Action suggested that the disclosed temperature range of 500-700° C (page 10, lines 1-3 of Applicants' specification) be included in Applicants' claims (apparently in all of Applicants' claims), Applicants' attorney pointed out that Applicants' specification did not clearly limit the combustibility of the impermeable layer to the aforementioned temperature range, and therefore Applicants felt that it was inappropriate, particularly in the absence of any relevant prior art on point, to further limit Applicants' independent claim 1 by addition of such temperature range. However, Applicants did again propose to add such temperature range in one or more dependent claims. Any other arguments presented during the telephone interview are included in the remarks below herein.

Consistent with Applicants' proposal to add dependent claims, claims 14 and 15 have been added to this application, and are supported by Applicants' disclosure at page 9, line 8 through page 10, line 3 of Applicants' specification.

Applicants believe that the present amendment places this application fully in condition for allowance, and surely places the application in better condition for any appeal. Applicants note that claims 14 and 15 are added here, after final rejection, but

also note that former claims 12 and 13 had previously been canceled. Further, the subject matter of claims 14 and 15 had been in discussion during prosecution of this application before the final Office Action of May 17, 2006. In these circumstances, and particularly since this Amendment advances the prosecution of this application, entry of this Amendment and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

1. Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, the Office Action alleging that the term “combustible, impermeable layer” is unclear “as to any particular temperature range at which the impermeable layer is combustible.”

As stated above, Applicants have now added that temperature range in dependent claims 14 and 15, but still believe that such a limited temperature range is inappropriate for inclusion in Applicants’ independent claim 1.

Applicants’ specification, page 9, lines 11 and 12, make it quite clear that the impermeable material is not restricted to any particular material. Applicants’ specification, page 9, lines 11-19, state that the impermeable material may be formed of resin, such as plastic, rubber, paper, cloth, or like fiber(s). The example at page 14, line 15, is polyethylene. These impermeable layer may comprise the edge of the holding material impregnated with impermeable matter, such as oils, fats, or grease. These various materials are recited in Applicants’ dependent claims 8 and 9, respectively. Page 9, lines 24 and 25, says the impermeable layer is preferably combustible.

Attached are reference materials showing that the auto-ignition temperature for paper is about 233° C [Exhibit A], the auto-ignition temperature for oily cotton is as low

as about 120° C and the ignition temperature for non-oily cotton is about 407 ° C [Exhibit B], and the flash point of polyethylene is about 221° C [Exhibit C]. These are materials specifically disclosed in Applicants' specification as suitable for use in the claimed impermeable layer, and as demonstrated by the aforementioned evidence, all of them have combustible temperatures significantly below 500° C.

The "500 to 700° C" thermal process temperature stated in Applicants' specification is no more than an exemplary temperature, which process may also involve curing or driving off of liquid carrier used for applying catalyst, and was not intended to be a limitation upon the combustibility temperature of suitable impermeable layer materials. For all the foregoing reasons, Applicants continue to believe that both their specification and independent claims are clear and readily understood by one of ordinary skill in this art, and that Applicants' specification does not limit the combustibility temperature of suitable impermeable materials to the temperature range which the Office Action suggested be included as a limitation in all of Applicants' claims.

For all the foregoing reasons Applicants believe that this application is now fully in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment and allowance of all claims 1-11, 14 and 15 are respectfully requested.


The PTO is authorized to charge/credit any necessary fees or overpayment to Applicants' attorneys' deposit account No. 19-4293. Should the Examiner feel that further amendment would place this application into even better condition for issue, the

Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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